

(7)

T H E  
C O N D U C T  
O F T H E  
B I R M I N G H A M C A N A L C O M P A N Y,  
T o w a r d s I N D I V I D U A L S , a n d t h e P U B L I C ,  
F A I R L Y S T A T E D .

**B**EFORE THEY OBTAINED THEIR ACT—they engaged to make the Course of the Canal *on a low Level*, through the great Collieries there, and on the *North Side* of the Town of Bilston.

AFTER THE ACT PASSED—they executed the Canal *on an high Level*, on the *South Side* of the said Town.—See Plan.

BEFORE THEY OBTAINED THEIR ACT—they engaged to execute the Canal to Mr. Colmore's Estate at New Hall, near Birmingham.

AFTER THE ACT PASSED—they refused so to execute the Canal, and persevered in such Refusal, till they were compelled to do it by an Act of Parliament, obtained at Mr. Colmore's Expence; which Act expressly states, “that the said Company had refused to complete the same.”—See said Act, 11th Geo. III.

BEFORE THEY OBTAINED THEIR ACT—they engaged to make a Junction with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal at Alderley, in Staffordshire.

AFTER THE ACT PASSED—they refused to complete such Junction: when the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Company took proper Measures for obtaining from Parliament effectual Powers to compel them to perform such Agreement *voluntarily entered into*—they were obliged to submit to the ignominious Condition of assigning the Tolls of their Canal to Trustees, who were authorized to apply the same for the Purpose of completing the said Junction.

The Earl of Dartmouth, Sir Edward Littleton, and Moreton Walhouse, Esquire, acting Trustees under the said Assignment, are now alive.

Thus much for the GOOD FAITH of the Birmingham Canal Company.

The Event of the several repeated Applications of the Oxford and Coventry Canal Companies, for a Junction with the Birmingham Canal Company, mentioned in former Publications, is an everlasting Testimony of the PUBLIC SPIRIT of such Company.

Nothing is wanting to complete the Character of this *respectable Body*, (see Mr. Legge's Case) but the following Transcript of an Edict, issued by them in the Hour of their Insolence, which will exhibit to the Public a most substantial Proof of their *Moderation, Wisdom, and Equity*.

C O P Y of an original Order, now in the Hands of the Solicitor of the Bilston Canal Bill.

“ Birmingham Canal Office, 3d July 1775.

“ The Water in the Canal being very low, the Committee have ordered,  
“ that no Boat shall pass the Locks with less than 20 Tons.

“ S. W. P. Padmore.”

The Average Weight of the Cargo of a Canal Boat is about 20 Tons. At the Period above mentioned, Canal Boats *could not*, for the Reason assigned, carry more than 14 Tons;—so that, to all Appearance, the Navigation must have stopped—had not the Birmingham Canal Company, from Motives of public Spirit, been graciously pleased to dispense with the Performance of this written Order, by a verbal one to this Effect:—“ That Boats with less than 20 Tons should pass the Locks, provided the Owner thereof paid Tonnage for 20 Tons.”

The Subscribers to the Bilston Canal are willing to risque the Fate of their Bill on the satisfactory Proof of these their Allegations—and beg Permission to refer the Members of the House of Commons, to the surviving Trustees—to the Act of the 11th Geo. III.—to the Plan—and to the former Representatives of the County of Stafford.—The Property of the Coal Masters on the Lower Level, is worth upwards of £. 400,000; the Stock of the Oxford and Coventry Canals, is £. 261,000; the Stock of the Trunk Company, whose Welfare is intimately connected with that of the Two other great Companies, amounts to £. 300,000.

It is therefore submitted to the Wisdom of Parliament, whether it is proper and fit to place the Power of controuling the Fortune of the Coal Masters and these Companies in the Hands of those Men, who, in the Instances hereinbefore given, have been guilty of BREACH OF FAITH, WANT OF PUBLIC SPIRIT, OPPRESSION, FOLLY, AND INJUSTICE.